

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
SENATE HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES STANDING COMMITTEE

February 9, 2021

1:32 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Senator David Wilson, Chair
Senator Shelley Hughes, Vice Chair
Senator Mia Costello
Senator Lora Reinbold
Senator Tom Begich

MEMBERS ABSENT

All members present

OTHER LEGISLATORS PRESENT

Senator Peter Micciche

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

SENATE BILL NO. 56

"An Act extending the January 15, 2021, governor's declaration of a public health disaster emergency in response to the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic; providing for a financing plan; making temporary changes to state law in response to the COVID-19 outbreak in the following areas: occupational and professional licensing, practice, and billing; telehealth; fingerprinting requirements for health care providers; charitable gaming and online ticket sales; access to federal stabilization funds; wills; unfair or deceptive trade practices; and meetings of shareholders; and providing for an effective date."

- MOVED CSSB 56 (HSS) OUT OF COMMITTEE

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

BILL: SB 56

SHORT TITLE: EXTENDING COVID 19 DISASTER EMERGENCY

SPONSOR(S): RULES BY REQUEST OF THE GOVERNOR

01/25/21 (S) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS

01/25/21	(S)	HSS, L&C, FIN
02/02/21	(S)	HSS AT 1:30 PM BUTROVICH 205
02/02/21	(S)	Heard & Held
02/02/21	(S)	MINUTE(HSS)
02/04/21	(S)	HSS AT 1:30 PM BUTROVICH 205
02/04/21	(S)	Heard & Held
02/04/21	(S)	MINUTE(HSS)
02/08/21	(S)	L&C AT 1:30 PM BELTZ 105 (TSBldg)
02/08/21	(S)	Scheduled but Not Heard
02/09/21	(S)	HSS AT 1:30 PM BUTROVICH 205

WITNESS REGISTER

JOHN ZAFADA, Policy Director
Alaska Primary Care Association
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of SB 56.

NANCY FREDERICKSON-POPE, representing self
Palmer, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to SB 56.

ED MARTIN, KEE Construction
Cooper Landing, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to SB 56.

KATHLEEN MARTIN, representing self
Cooper Landing, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to SB 56.

HERMAN MORGAN, representing self
Aniak, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to SB 56.

ADAM HYKES, representing self
Homer, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to SB 56.

CRYSTAL CONNER, representing self
Soldotna, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to SB 56.

RACHEL LORD, representing self
Homer, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of SB 56.

MINDY O'NEALL, Presiding Officer

Fairbanks North Star Borough Assembly
Fairbanks, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of SB 56.

JOHN HOCHENDONER, representing self
Fairbanks, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to SB 56.

PATTY WILBANKS, representing self
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to SB 56.

KATI CAPOZZI, President and CEO
Alaska Chamber of Commerce
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of SB 56.

MICHAEL HANIFEN, D.C., representing self
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to SB 56.

MIKE ALEXANDER, representing self
Big Lake, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to SB 56.

DIANA GRIESER, representing self
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to SB 56.

ELIZABETH RUFF, Ed.D., Administrator
Lower Kuskokwim School District
Mertarvik, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of SB 56.

THERESA IMLACH, representing self
Wasilla, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to SB 56.

BERT HOUGHTALING, representing self
Big Lake, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to SB 56.

VICKI KENNEDY, representing self
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in opposition to SB 56.

ACTION NARRATIVE

[1:32:23 PM](#)

CHAIR DAVID WILSON called the Senate Health and Social Services Standing Committee meeting to order at 1:32 p.m. Present at the call to order were Senators Begich, Costello, Reinbold, Hughes, and Chair Wilson.

SB 56-EXTENDING COVID 19 DISASTER EMERGENCY

[1:32:49 PM](#)

CHAIR WILSON announced the consideration of SENATE BILL NO. 56 "An Act extending the January 15, 2021, governor's declaration of a public health disaster emergency in response to the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic; providing for a financing plan; making temporary changes to state law in response to the COVID-19 outbreak in the following areas: occupational and professional licensing, practice, and billing; telehealth; fingerprinting requirements for health care providers; charitable gaming and online ticket sales; access to federal stabilization funds; wills; unfair or deceptive trade practices; and meetings of shareholders; and providing for an effective date."

CHAIR WILSON stated that the committee would continue with public testimony and then go on to the amendment process.

[1:33:56 PM](#)

CHAIR WILSON opened public testimony and stated a limit of two minutes for public testimony.

[1:34:12 PM](#)

JOHN ZAFADA, Policy Director, Alaska Primary Care Association, Anchorage, Alaska, said that his association supports Alaska's 27 community health centers that provide care for one in seven Alaskans. The association has submitted two letters on this topic. The association supports SB 56 and strongly encourages the legislature to pass this by next week to avoid a serious disruption of the extensive range of administrative, regulatory, and statutory flexibility that have allowed Alaska to respond to the pandemic. This emergency declaration has nothing to do with mask mandates, hunker downs, school schedules, or restaurant closures. These are all matters of local control and will continue with or without the declaration. Alaska's health centers have stood up contact tracing, telehealth, and vaccination programs that rely on alignment between state and federal government. Without action on the executive order,

either by the legislature or the governor, the association is very concerned about the continuation of these services in the near term.

[1:35:45 PM](#)

At ease

[1:35:59 PM](#)

CHAIR WILSON reconvened the meeting.

SENATOR REINBOLD asked that every person who testifies state whether that person has any financial interest or has received COVID funding. That is very important.

CHAIR WILSON clarified that is a request. Testifiers do not have to state that in public testimony.

[1:36:43 PM](#)

SENATOR BEGICH added that he objects because he has many interests as well. Individuals have the right to speak and testify as individuals.

CHAIR WILSON continued with public testimony.

[1:37:17 PM](#)

NANCY FREDERICKSON-POPE, representing self, Palmer, Alaska, said she has serious concerns that people who call in from the healthcare industry are not calling in as private citizens. They are calling in as organizations, supposedly in the best interests of the citizens of the state. Most of them do have financial ties and are hoping for COVID money for their organizations. The legislature should represent citizens and not special interests. These healthcare industries and nonprofits are not acting in the state's best interests. The numbers in the state are low, not because of the actions of local government. It is because of the dynamics of Alaska and its geographical challenges. Anything that infringes upon Alaskans' freedom and constitutional rights is something to be wary off. She believes in small government. This is not in the best interests of the people of Alaska. It is only in the best interests of the healthcare industry so it can continue to siphon money from the government. The legislature should listen less to them and more to the people.

[1:40:20 PM](#)

ED MARTIN, KEE Construction, Cooper Landing, Alaska, said he is currently in Hawaii because of the mandate. This is an

unconstitutional abomination and a fraud. He and his wife sent an email regarding the declaration. The state of Alaska has surrendered its sovereignty to the CDC. The state does not need emergency powers to get federal funds. Kristi Noem [governor of South Dakota] has managed to do this without any emergency and mandates that are in force now. The governor's own announcement about this bill stated that only the legislature can extend these emergency powers. Mr. Martin asked then why has the governor done this three times. He is 65. As he sees it, this is a clear violation and deprivation of rights under the cover of law by everyone who signed onto this declaration and/or actions by the governor or anyone else at the Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS). The legislature needs to send a cease-and-desist letter to the governor to stop this.

KATHLEEN MARTIN, representing self, Cooper Landing, Alaska, said their company is an earth-moving construction company that is considered an essential service, but they did minimal activity last year because of COVID. They were in Hawaii when different mandates went into effect and hunkered down in Hawaii rather than risk contracting the disease because they are both elders. Because of that they had to hire people in Alaska to finish a borough project. As an essential service they were supposed to put together a COVID plan. All they can do as an essential service is continually try to know what is going on out there. Sometimes even the so-called professionals disagree. They can only advise their employees to be current with whatever the current mandates are. Guidance is constantly evolving and changing. Their essential business is threatened with serious fines and penalties into the millions, but COVID could be transmitted before people have symptoms. Where the liability actually lies is not clear cut. She does not appreciate being threatened with liability as an employer. For her, it is better to minimize any activity rather than be accused of passing on COVID. She asked the committee to please keep in mind that whatever they put out there affects people in multilayered ways, as a human being, an employee, and an employer. She wanted to stress the mental anguish this is causing people. People are becoming suicidal. That is also one of the side effects of what the committee does.

1:46:43 PM

HERMAN MORGAN, representing self, Aniak, Alaska, said that anyone with a conflict of interest and who benefits financially should put that in writing. In some places government officials are being sued for crimes against humanity for destroying people's lives. The committee should oppose SB 56 because of

inflated infection numbers and the medication ivermectin and hydroxychloroquine clear COVID in 48 hours. There is no concern for hospital bed shortages. That is just an argument for emergency orders and lockdowns. It is about receiving federal disaster money. In reality it should be about people losing jobs and kids not being educated because of lockdowns. Alaskans should be protected against untested vaccines. Vaccines are being used for genocide in other countries. In Africa more people die of vaccines than from COVID. He asked why is informed consent not being given. The Indian Health Services has been vaccinating people in villages since December without telling any of them of the known dangerous side effects. Vaccines are destroying Alaska. The WHO (World Health Organization) announced that PCR testing is a fraud, resulting in way too many positives.

1:50:07 PM

ADAM HYKES, representing self, Homer, Alaska, said that he has no financial gain for or against this bill. A year ago effective treatments for COVID were unknown and there was no vaccine. Now both are available. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration halted a hydroxychloroquine study after a Lancet study suggested that it may not be safe, despite its well-known safety profile, even for pregnant and nursing mothers and its widespread approval for over 70 years. The Lancet study was later retracted due to fabricated data on behalf of Surgisphere, a company from which Lancet derived its data. In October of 2020 the American Medical Association reversed its stance on hydroxychloroquine. In January of 2021 the American Journal of Medicine also reversed its stance on hydroxychloroquine not being effective. Even Facebook, only after being sued, agreed that it had made a mistake in censoring information about hydroxychloroquine. A recent study found that nations that use hydroxychloroquine as an early treatment for COVID-19 saw 79 percent fewer deaths than nations that did not. One Native American tribe down south sent its members ivermectin, another potent prophylactic, which might offer aid to those in rural Alaska. Experimental vaccines are rapidly becoming available. He asked the legislature to put an end to the psychological trauma inflicted on Alaskans this past year. Because there are therapeutics and multiple vaccines, there is no longer any need for this disaster declaration. People will either learn to live with this virus or destroy themselves trying to stop it.

1:52:24 PM

CRYSTAL CONNER, representing self, Soldotna, Alaska, said that she believes in the everyday American's right to choose what is

best for themselves and their families. Half of Americans do not wear the mask because they literally don't believe that the COVID pandemic is real. A good portion believe the pandemic is a propaganda hoax perpetuated by the global elite to steal an election, take out small business, and force a nanobot-filled injection for the purpose of tracking, as well as ushering a new global currency with the great reset at the World Economic Forum. She is censored every single day. All the left has proven during this time in history is that it is a Marxist-driven movement that does not believe in the individual's right to thoughtfully disagree. But this is America, this is the state of Alaska. Alaskans believe in the right of the freedom to choose, the freedom to disagree. A second pandemic hoax is being planned, so this is not going to stop. People have to rise up as American citizens, form themselves properly, and put a stop to the control of the corporate global elite.

1:54:32 PM

RACHEL LORD, representing self, Homer, Alaska, said she is a parent and a small business owner. This emergency declaration by the state is necessary for logistics and partnerships around the state. All of the debate and questions about what that looks like are merited and must continue, but the state has a need for a coordinated response to the benefit of the citizens of communities and municipalities and of businesses around the state. This emergency declaration in Alaska is not about messaging and regardless of this, the status of COVID in the community is not going to change. This is going to allow all municipalities, communities, representatives, administration, healthcare partners, and everyone to work together efficiently and effectively, which is what the state needs. This is critical for efficiency.

1:56:30 PM

MINDY O'NEALL, Presiding Officer, Fairbanks North Star Borough Assembly, Fairbanks, Alaska, said that on March 11, 2020, Governor Dunleavy declared the first state emergency for COVID-19. Since then, the Fairbanks North Star Borough has been able to continue to provide public services by adapting how it conducts business, taking action necessary to protect employees and the community, moving meetings online and developing a risk matrix for public facilities. As a second class borough, Fairbanks has often felt hamstrung as it lacks health powers and therefore cannot spend its own tax revenues on health and social service responses to the pandemic. If the state declaration expires, there are severe, local implications, including that the borough may have limited eligibility for future federal

grant monies related to the pandemic, and the use of the Carlson Center as an alternative hospital and vaccination site may be jeopardized. These effects would be widespread, affecting the most vulnerable populations, hospitals, long-term care facilities, public facilities, schools, educators, support staff, and students. If the state declaration expires, this would place the Fairbanks community at a disadvantage to protect itself and be good neighbors to the rest of the state and the country. Fairbanks is at a critical moment as its schools are back in session, the flu season is here, and the next variant of the disease could strike. Fairbanks is beating this now and is optimistic that it can get back to normal operations soon, but it is not the time to stop doing what has made it successful to this point. While this declaration has direct impact to the Fairbanks community as a second class borough, the implications affect all Alaskans. After dealing with this pandemic for nearly a year, residents are tired and need certainty and stability. The state values local control, but in this case, where there is a declared world pandemic, the borough cannot act without state authority. The legislature and/or the administration must find a way to extend the public health emergency before the current declaration expires this Saturday at midnight to avoid unnecessary uncertainty and risk surrounding the community's response efforts. She urged swift action in support of SB 56.

SENATOR REINBOLD said that the Fairbanks North Star Borough has received almost \$25 million to date.

1:59:27 PM

JOHN HOCHENDONER, representing self, Fairbanks, Alaska, said he wanted to talk about what the pandemic did not do and what Dunleavy administration, Anne Zink, Adam Crum, and the team have done. The pandemic did not utilize faulty and false computer modeling to estimate cases, hospitalizations, and deaths. The pandemic did not fracture a cohesive society into essential and nonessential cohorts. The pandemic did not isolate seniors and elders from loved ones without their consent or acknowledgment. The pandemic did not silently move the goalposts without providing clear metrics or justification. It did not use selective message and data to coerce and subsequently further divide the community. The pandemic did not promote evidentiary baseless community-wide masking while ignoring robust randomized control trials, metanalyses, OSHA research, and pandemic planning documentation from every government and international and national organization on the planet that advised against the use of community masking as a mitigation tactic all while providing zero acknowledgment of the very real negative health

impacts, both physiological and psychological. The pandemic did not initiate lockdowns or stay at home orders, did not close schools, did not advise that children be subjected to the dehumanizing torture of masking without policy-grade research nor did it then prostitute those same children via social media posts to promote its agenda. It did not create lucrative industries dependent on its continuation. The pandemic is not allowing a private corporation to dehumanize, harass, and corral people at the airports to get tested. The pandemic did not mention or demonize the very real, proven, and diverse prophylactic and supplementation options available. It is not promoting a not-fit-for-purpose, nondiagnostic test with a known false positive susceptibility that is used to broadcast case numbers. The pandemic is not diagnosing an individual with a disease upon the detection of a fragment of RNA without a full medical evaluation and accompanying symptoms. It is not promoting the lie that is asymptomatic transmission. The pandemic did not raise the unemployment, suicide, suicidal ideation, domestic abuse, or substance abuse rates. The pandemic is not requesting an extension of an already fraudulent disaster declaration to facilitate the uptake of a for-profit investigational and experimental pharmaceutical product with devastating side effects and unknown efficacy that people won't be told about and won't know the risk of experiencing. He has no intent to disparage nor downplay the very real impact this disease has had on the state and the nation, but after a year, the state has an opportunity to detach and reflect in honesty about the collateral damage, the efficacy of mitigation tactics, and nonpharmaceutical interventions, and the role people want government to play going forward.

2:02:55 PM

PATTY WILBANKS, representing self, Anchorage, Alaska, said she is retired Alaska colonel with the National Guard. She is opposed to extending emergency powers because COVID-19 is no longer an emergency situation. The state should not do it because it is easier for state agencies or to continue to get funding for medical organizations. The federal government continues to induce fear, and it is up to the state to stop the madness and protect the citizens from unconstitutional demands and government overreach. If these emergency powers are extended, it sends a message to citizens that COVID is so deadly it deserves this moniker when it doesn't. The cities and boroughs in Alaska, with Anchorage being the best example, are using the emergency powers as justification to continue their unconstitutional mandates for their citizens. Logic must prevail and it starts with legislators. The Health and Social Services

documents state that there are 48 million cases of COVID-19 confirmed worldwide with nine million cases in the United States. The numbers seem big and scary, but compared to the flu, there were 45 million flu cases in the United States in 2017 compared to 48 million worldwide. There are more cases of flu in the United States than COVID worldwide. The death rate in the US for flu was 61,000. The COVID rate was 235,000. This is higher but take into consideration that the flu has been almost nonexistent this year. She asks where were the emergency powers for the governor during the 2017-2018 flu season. A year ago COVID was not understood or how serious it really was, and she supported the emergency powers and believed it was a prudent decision. But now, more is known and it does not qualify. What is an emergency is the suicide rates in Alaska. The suppression, the fear, the loss of income, and the isolation weigh on people, but children are bearing the brunt of this insanity. Most of the children in Anchorage have not attended school in almost a year. Education is suffering, but most importantly their mental health [is]. The teachers are too scared to go back because they fear the disease and granting these emergency powers plays into those fears but the children are suffering. She recounted a story of a fifth grader thinking about death because he is depressed and lonely. She asked the committee to stop playing into this fear and to not approve the emergency powers.

2:06:29 PM

KATI CAPOZZI, President and CEO, Alaska Chamber of Commerce, Anchorage, Alaska, said business in Alaska has suffered immensely over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic, and 11 months into this public health and economic crisis, many are struggling to keep their doors open. Despite the twists and turns the business community has endured since last March, they are starting to see a light at the end of the tunnel and are plotting a course toward recovery. Economic recovery, however, hinges on continued vigilant response to COVID-19. Healthy people are the foundation of a healthy economy. Addressing public health concerns contributes to Alaska's ability to recover. While Alaska has had lower case counts and hospitalizations and leads the nation in vaccinations per capita, it is more important than ever to keep the tools in place that allow for this positive trend. Any lapse in the state's ability to accept and distribute vaccines, procure PPE, or receive other healthcare resources immediately impedes the progress the state has made and adds unacceptable uncertainty to the state's collective recovery, both from a health and economic perspective. Without the extension, operations throughout the state and across many industries are under threat, causing

unnecessary and avoidable obstacles to getting the state's economy back on track. The chamber wants to be clear that from the business community's perspective, the emergency declaration extension does not represent more restrictions and burdensome mandates. Quite the opposite. The state health orders authorized by the disaster declaration place a priority on critical infrastructure industries, implement workplace safety protocols, and retain state primacy for promoting safe travel into and within Alaska. The state declaration supports the business community and ensures that commerce continues. The state's fragile economy depends on the certainty that the emergency declaration provides. The Alaska Chamber urges swift passage of SB 56.

2:08:49 PM

MICHAEL HANIFEN, D.C., representing self, Anchorage, Alaska, said he is a doctor of chiropractic, a small business owner, and an Air Force veteran. In local testimony, he has proven beyond a shadow of doubt that the state is not in a pandemic. The COVID PCR test is invalid. Virologists from California said that the cycling of the PCR test is way too high. It is set at 40, and the industry standard is 17. It still does not prove that someone is sick or ill or contagious. The state and local governments are basing their numbers and actions on false data. Not looking at this is a dereliction of duty by Dr. Zink and everyone in state government. If the cycling was reduced to 35 cycles, that would mean that 43 percent of positive tests would be negative. If it were cycled down to 30, which is still double the industry standard, that would indicate that 63 percent would no longer be judged a positive. The state has seen an increase in suicides; the state has lost 277 souls, one of which was his patient. The state has lost over 655 souls to suicide and drug overdose from January 1, 2020, through November 30, 2020, according to state of Alaska epidemiologists. The suicide careline saw an increase of 90 percent in calls just in the third quarter comparing 2019 to 2020, with a 51 percent increase in the number of new callers. The state is not in a state of emergency or pandemic. The numbers do not even indicate that the state is in an epidemic at this stage of the game. It is an abuse of power to continue to extend these orders. He understands that the state and the local governments each have their own powers associated with that, but to continue on, Governor Dunleavy needs to set the example for the entire state and recognize the state is no longer in a state of emergency. The state has healthcare procedures that can save people through hydroxychloroquine, vitamin D, zinc, and vitamin C.

[2:12:18 PM](#)

MIKE ALEXANDER, representing self, Big Lake, Alaska, said he is a retired nurse and has no financial interests tied to this. The nonessential workers of Big Lake have been thrown under the bus by these emergency orders. Treatments are now available, and the vaccine's effects and effectiveness are questionable. He would like the state to follow South Dakota's example. He is vehemently opposed to SB 56. There isn't an epidemic. The only people in favor of this are going to make a buck off of this.

[2:13:34 PM](#)

DIANA GRIESER, representing self, Juneau, Alaska, said that her husband was in Alaska before statehood and that she arrived shortly after. She is a retired nurse. She does not support SB 56 for all the various reasons others have testified about.

[2:14:52 PM](#)

ELIZABETH RUFF, Ed.D., Administrator, Lower Kuskokwim School District, Mertarvik, Alaska, said that the emergency relief should be extended with consideration for rural school districts. The Lower Kuskokwim School District has gone to great lengths to bring connectedness to the rural villages. Additional funds need to be focused on continuing to build the infrastructure to support this system long after the pandemic becomes ancient memory. Schools would also benefit from additional dollars towards supplies so they can support their students who are attempting to learn and be engaged with their teachers through Zoom and Moodle classes.

[2:16:36 PM](#)

THERESA IMLACH, representing self, Wasilla, Alaska, said she is a small business owner. In the beginning the emergency declaration was a tremendous blessing, but it is no longer needed. There are tremendous therapeutics that work. Continuing being dishonest about therapeutics harms the community. The government protocols have been lock up, shut down, stay in your homes. That feels like the government is saying to trust it because the government doesn't trust people. She sees that small businesses are suffering, children are suffering, and America is built on the backs of small businesses. Her reflection question is the committee trying to destroy small businesses. Her friends in the restaurant industry have lost their livelihood. The emergency is hurting Alaskans. Let people know about therapeutics. Merck has stopped developing a COVID-19 vaccine because treatment works.

[2:18:35 PM](#)

BERT HOUGHTALING, representing self, Big Lake, Alaska, said he is not profiting from this nor has he received one penny of funding from anything that has been distributed. He is not considered an essential service, but he does provide an essential service that has kept him in business since the beginning of all this. Unfortunately, he cannot say that for the people his company services. The emergency was supposed to be declared so that the state could build up its medical facilities to take care of the massive flood of patients, but the numbers of people going into the hospitals has statistically matched prior years during regular flu seasons. The emergency that in the beginning caused everyone to be locked down is long gone. Right after Biden became president the PCR values were lowered to result in fewer false positives. This came from the WHO and the CDC. There is no difference with deaths than what has been seen with flu in the past.

[2:21:39 PM](#)

VICKI KENNEDY, representing self, Juneau, Alaska, said she had pneumonia and tested negative for COVID three times. She has seen more damage done by this bill than by anything COVID could have given her. There is no money made in the cure; money is made in the prevention and the treatment. She just doesn't trust any of it anymore when every box store was open but she couldn't go to church. Church members had to meet in secret. That is communistic.

[2:24:41 PM](#)

CHAIR WILSON closed public testimony.

[2:24:50 PM](#)

SENATOR REINBOLD objected.

[2:24:55 PM](#)

CHAIR WILSON closed public testimony and said there would be ample time for members of the public to testify in other committees of referral. The committee needs to get on to the amendment process.

[2:25:12 PM](#)

At ease

[2:25:18 PM](#)

CHAIR WILSON reconvened the meeting.

CHAIR WILSON noted the presence of Senate President, Senator Micciche. Chair Wilson announced that if there were any

questions, the drafter from Legislative Legal was online, as well as Colleen Glover from the Department of Revenue, Bryan Fisher from the Department of Military and Veteran Affairs, Heidi Hedberg, Director of Public Health, Director Sara Chambers from the Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development, and Susan Pollard from the Department of Law.

[2:26:59 PM](#)

SENATOR BEGICH moved Amendment 1.

AMENDMENT 1

32-GS1011\A.15

Dunmire

2/8/21

OFFERED IN THE SENATE

BY SENATOR BEGICH

TO: SB 56

Page 10, following line 4:

Insert a new bill section to read:

"* **Sec. 10.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to read:

CIVIL LIABILITY. A person may not be held liable for an action taken on or after February 14, 2021, and before the effective date of this Act that complies with or does not comply with an order, proclamation, or declaration adopted by the governor to respond to the declaration of a public health disaster emergency as extended by sec. 2 of this Act."

Renumber the following bill sections accordingly.

Page 10, line 14:

Delete "Sections 1 - 3 and 5 - 9"

Insert "Sections 1 - 3 and 5 - 10"

[2:27:04 PM](#)

SENATOR REINBOLD objected.

SENATOR BEGICH said Amendment 1 would insert a new section on page 10, line 4. This amendment comes out of a conversation the committee had when it was first presented the bill about retroactively enacting the bill. If the bill is passed, a retroactive clause would kick in back to February 14. The commissioner noted that mandates would expire and become recommendations after the order expired on February 13. Individuals coming into the state of Alaska would be under the

impression that they were under a recommendation. Then, when the retroactivity clause kicked in, if the bill passes, they would suddenly be under a mandate that would be retroactive to that date, thus creating a potential liability that they would be uninformed about. This [amendment] simply protects those individuals coming into the state from that liability that might otherwise accrue. He has spoken to the DHSS representative and the commissioner. They concur that this language would correct that issue if this bill should eventually pass.

[2:28:29 PM](#)

SENATOR REINBOLD maintained her objection. A roll call vote was taken. Senators Begich, Hughes, and Wilson voted in favor of Amendment 1 and Senators Costello and Reinbold voted against it. Therefore, Amendment 1 passed by a 3:2 vote.

[2:29:04 PM](#)

SENATOR HUGHES moved Amendment 2.

AMENDMENT 2

32-GS1011\A.29
Dunmire
2/8/21

OFFERED IN THE SENATE
TO: SB 56

BY SENATOR HUGHES

Page 3, line 26:
Delete "September 30, 2021"
Insert "March 15, 2021"

Page 3, line 31:
Delete "September 30, 2021"
Insert "March 15, 2021"

Page 6, line 1:
Delete "November 30, 2021"
Insert "May 15, 2021"

Page 6, line 16:
Delete "September 30, 2021"
Insert "March 15, 2021"

Page 10, line 10:
Delete "September 30, 2021"

Insert "March 15, 2021"

Page 10, line 15:

Delete "September 30, 2021"

Insert "March 15, 2021"

SENATOR REINBOLD objected.

CHAIR WILSON asked Senator Hughes to speak to her amendment.

2:29:09 PM

SENATOR HUGHES said this amendment changes the extension from September 30, 2021, to March 15, 2021. Her original intention was to get rid of the emergency declaration. The problem is that was complicated. The intent was to give the administration the specific tools it needs to do things like expedite procurement, and [deal with] PPE supplies, therapeutics, vaccines, and adequate testing sites, and to provide the administration everything it might need to finish this off. Like many who testified today, she does not think that the state is in a state of emergency. When she looks at page 3 [of the bill], it refers to the department monitoring and actively managing the situation. That does not signal emergency to her. She noted to the people online that their testimony was excellent. She took notes and appreciated the statistics from Dr. Hanifen. However, the legislature needs to make sure that the administration has the tools to monitor and manage the situation at this point. If she had rushed forward an amendment to stop the declaration without providing an amendment with all the necessary tools, the state would have had a problem. She is suggesting, and what this amendment does, is 30 days to get all the ducks in a row to ensure the administration has all the tools it needs. This bill next moves to the Labor and Commerce Committee. She has had conversations with the chair of that committee, Senator Costello, who is diligently working to ensure the administration would have the tools. Speaking to members of the public, as much as she would like the emergency to go away because the state is moving to a period of recovery and normalcy, it is necessary, so that the legislature gets this right and can ensure the health and wellbeing of Alaskans, to extend the declaration for 30 days. She has gotten a lot of information from people supporting the continuation until September 30. There is a lot of incorrect information about the ability to receive federal dollars without the declaration. That is not true. These 30 days will allow the legislature to tease out all that and with good information can make a better decision at that point.

SENATOR REINBOLD said she wanted to apologize to testifiers online who have waited three afternoons to testify. Now that testimony is sadly closed that will be made right at some point. She passionately disagrees with this amendment. The administration has had a year. The administration has told her that it has been working since January of 2020 to get PPE and all that. She has never seen anything like it in the history of Alaska. Extending it another 30 days based on getting PPE is ridiculous. She is a passionate no on this.

[2:33:16 PM](#)

SENATOR REINBOLD maintained her objection. A roll call vote was taken. Senators Hughes, Costello, Begich, and Wilson voted in favor of Amendment 2 and Senator Reinbold voted against it. Therefore, Amendment 2 passed by a 4:1 vote.

[2:33:49 PM](#)

SENATOR REINBOLD moved Amendment 3.

AMENDMENT 3

32-GS1011\A.22

Dunmire

2/8/21

OFFERED IN THE SENATE
TO: SB 56

BY SENATOR REINBOLD

Page 5, line 24, through page 6, line 2:

Delete all material and insert:

"REPORTS. Beginning March 1, 2021, the Office of Management and Budget shall electronically submit, on the first day of the month, a report to the legislature that lists the expenditures used to cope with the public health disaster emergency declared by the governor on January 15, 2021, as extended by sec. 2 of this Act, and that identifies all actions taken by the governor, the Department of Health and Social Services, the Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs, and other state agencies directly related to the prevention, control, and status of novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) cases in the state. The report must include an explanation, made without disclosing information that would identify individuals, of any activities related to the isolation or quarantine of individuals to contain the spread of COVID-19 and of all adverse reactions,

injuries, side effects, and deaths related to a COVID-19 vaccine. The governor shall submit a final report not later than November 30, 2021, or 60 days after the date the governor determines, under sec. 2 of this Act, that the public health disaster emergency no longer exists, whichever is earlier. Each report submitted under this section must include cumulative information."

CHAIR WILSON objected.

2:34:00 PM

SENATOR REINBOLD said that page 5, line 24, of the bill, talks about reporting back to the legislature. Section 4 requires [a report of] total expenditures incurred by the state in response to the public health disaster. When SB 241 passed, and she was a no on that, there was a much better section on the reporting. This amendment requires much better reporting mechanisms, so it lists the expenditures to cope with the disaster and provides important information. The SHSS aide just passed out a supporting document to the committee with one example from SB 241 of quarantine and isolation orders, especially involuntary orders. That was one of the requirements for SB 241. There was a lot more detailed information provided to the legislature, which is much better in SB 241 than the high-level information in SB 56. The report in this amendment, for transparency and for important, detailed information, is not just total expenditures.

SENATOR HUGHES commented that in the way it is written now, it looks like any activity related to isolation or quarantine would be reported. To her, that includes if the person in quarantine is playing Scrabble or calling his mother. It is not clear. It is just saying any activity. There is a problem with the amendment.

SENATOR REINBOLD replied that when people are told that they have to isolate or quarantine, that is important information. Basically, a lot of people have lost their freedom. She can give an example of someone who was locked in the Captain Cook Hotel on the way to the Slope and was not given a key to get out of the hotel room. This is super important for the legislature to have this information. This is a free society and the COVID disaster has stripped freedoms. This is critically important to get information out to the legislature and to the people about what is exactly going on.

SENATOR HUGHES said that she will be a no because it is not clearly written. She cannot support this as written.

SENATOR REINBOLD said that this report includes, without disclosing any personal information, an explanation of activities regarding isolation and quarantine. It also talks about adverse reactions, injuries, side effects, and deaths related to the COVID-19 vaccine. This is important information that Alaskans deserve, especially because of the rush to get the mRNA vaccination out. She is sorry that Senator Hughes has a problem with the grammar, but Alaskans deserve to know the adverse reactions, the injuries, the side effects, and deaths related to this vaccine.

[2:38:08 PM](#)

CHAIR WILSON maintained his objection A roll call vote was taken. Senator Reinbold voted in favor of Amendment 3 and Senators Costello, Begich, Hughes, and Wilson voted against it. Therefore, Amendment 3 failed by a 1:4 vote.

[2:38:43 PM](#)

SENATOR REINBOLD moved Amendment 4.

AMENDMENT 4

32-GS1011\A.21
Dunmire
2/8/21

OFFERED IN THE SENATE
TO: SB 56

BY SENATOR REINBOLD

Page 4, line 18, through page 5, line 21:

Delete all material and insert:

"PUBLIC HEALTH DISASTER EMERGENCY; FINANCING PLAN. The legislature shall create a financing plan for the declaration of a public health disaster emergency issued by the governor on January 15, 2021, as extended by sec. 2 of this Act, through a separate appropriation bill passed by the legislature. The Legislative Budget and Audit Committee shall selectively audit emergency disaster funds to ensure public trust and accountability and to ensure the intent of the legislature is met in the distribution of the funds."

CHAIR WILSON objected for purposes of discussion.

SENATOR REINBOLD said that Amendment 4 takes the power for creating a financial plan from the executive branch and gives it to the legislature.

SENATOR HUGHES noted that she normally agrees with Senator Reinbold on many things. This may be a good idea, but this is something that should be considered by the Finance Committee. As a member of the Senate HSS Committee she does not feel comfortable making the call on this, so she will be a no. If someone is unsure about something, it is better to be a no.

SENATOR REINBOLD said that the constitution gives the appropriation power to the legislature. Legislators take an oath to the constitution, which says that the legislature does the financing. This just allows the legislature to have its due constitutional authority to create a finance plan.

SENATOR HUGHES responded that what is in the bill right now is a financing plan, so the legislature does have a part in that.

SENATOR REINBOLD said this bill allows the executive branch to put together the financing plan. Her amendment allows the legislature to do it.

[2:40:24 PM](#)

CHAIR WILSON maintained his objection. A roll call vote was taken. Senator Reinbold voted in favor of Amendment 4 and Senators Hughes, Costello, Begich, and Wilson voted against it. Therefore, Amendment 4 failed by a 1:4 vote.

SENATOR REINBOLD moved Amendment 5.

AMENDMENT 5

32-GS1011\A.20
Dunmire
2/8/21

OFFERED IN THE SENATE
TO: SB 56

BY SENATOR REINBOLD

Page 4, lines 5 - 6:

Delete "commissioner of health and social services"

Insert "legislature, based on credible scientific, epidemiological, or virological nationally respected peer-reviewed research,"

Page 4, line 8, following "proclamation":

Insert ", or the legislature shall adopt a resolution stating,"

Page 4, line 10, following "governor":

Insert "or legislature"

Page 4, line 11:

Following "commissioner":

Insert "or legislature"

Page 4, lines 13 - 15:

Delete all material.

CHAIR WILSON objected for purposes of discussion.

SENATOR REINBOLD said that Amendment 5 replaces the commissioner of DHSS with the legislature, "based on credible scientific, epidemiological, or virological nationally respected peer-reviewed research." She withdrew the amendment because she wanted this "in order to declare a disaster." This is in regard to ending the disaster. The intent is not clear.

[2:41:40 PM](#)

CHAIR WILSON announced that Amendment 5 is withdrawn.

SENATOR REINBOLD moved Amendment 6.

AMENDMENT 6

32-GS1011\A.26

Dunmire

2/8/21

OFFERED IN THE SENATE
TO: SB 56

BY SENATOR REINBOLD

Page 1, line 1, following "Act":

Insert "**relating to a state disaster plan;**"

Page 3, following line 26:

Insert a new bill section to read:

"* **Sec. 2.** AS 26.23.040 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

(h) In addition to the state emergency plan required by (a) of this section, the state shall prepare and maintain a disaster plan to be executed in the event of a natural disaster or external threat. The disaster plan must include provisions for distributing food and water to each district of the state and for providing heat and medical supplies to key facilities in each district of the state within three days of the disaster or threat. The state shall stockpile sufficient food, water, and other supplies for 60 days of emergency use for each community in the state."

Renumber the following bill sections accordingly.

Page 4, line 21:

Delete "sec. 2"

Insert "sec. 3"

Page 5, line 21:

Delete "sec. 2"

Insert "sec. 3"

Page 6, line 1:

Delete "sec. 2"

Insert "sec. 3"

Page 6, line 7:

Delete "sec. 2"

Insert "sec. 3"

Page 6, line 17:

Delete "sec. 2"

Insert "sec. 3"

Page 7, line 13:

Delete "sec. 2"

Insert "sec. 3"

Page 8, line 14:

Delete "sec. 2"

Insert "sec. 3"

Page 9, line 16:

Delete "sec. 2"

Insert "sec. 3"

Page 10, line 11:

Delete "sec. 2"

Insert "sec. 3"

Page 10, line 13:

Delete "sec. 2"

Insert "sec. 3"

Page 10, line 14:

Delete "Sections 1 - 3 and 5 - 9"

Insert "Sections 1, 3, 4, and 6 - 10"

Page 10, line 16:

Delete "sec. 2"

Insert "sec. 3"

Page 10, line 18:

Delete "sec. 2"

Insert "sec. 3"

CHAIR WILSON objected for purposes of discussion.

SENATOR REINBOLD said that Amendment 6 states that the state shall supply sufficient food, water, and other supplies for 60-day emergency use for the community. If the committee is talking about rewriting disaster declaration statute, which SB 56 does, it is important that the state plans for sufficient food, water, and other supplies for emergency use for each and every district in the state.

[2:42:44 PM](#)

SENATOR HUGHES replied that she does believe that the legislature needs to look at disaster statutes as an overall whole. There might be an opportunity to do that in the Judiciary Committee. Having a plan in place is good, but this amendment would add a huge fiscal note. It is the role of individuals and communities, rather than the state, to put away a 60-day supply. It is important. Alaska has earthquakes and other disasters. She appreciates the intent and she fully supports communities having a stockpile. Having the state do it for the communities and creating a huge fiscal note is an impediment to what the committee is presently dealing with. She hopes the legislature can have a discussion about these kinds of things. Food security is incredibly important. She does not agree with rushing this policy through at this time.

SENATOR REINBOLD responded that SB 56 is a rewrite of the Disaster [Act]. It is adding in a whole bunch of stuff. Therefore, this is the appropriate place because of fires, earthquakes, military threats, etc. A disaster plan is one of the most important things people can do to provide for food, water, heat, and medical supplies. If this is not included in a disaster plan, it is unbelievable. She urged a yes vote. This is just common sense.

[2:44:17 PM](#)

CHAIR WILSON maintained his objection. A roll call vote was taken. Senator Reinbold voted in favor of Amendment 6 and Senators Costello, Begich, Hughes, and Wilson voted against it. Therefore, Amendment 6 failed by a 1:4 vote.

SENATOR REINBOLD moved Amendment 7.

AMENDMENT 7

32-GS1011\A.19
Dunmire
2/8/21

OFFERED IN THE SENATE
TO: SB 56

BY SENATOR REINBOLD

Page 1, line 1:
Delete "**extending**"
Insert "**relating to**"

Page 1, line 12:
Delete "(a)"

Page 3, line 23, through page 4, line 15:
Delete all material.

Renumber the following bill sections accordingly.

Page 4, lines 20 - 21:
Delete "as extended by sec. 2 of this Act,"

Page 5, line 21:
Delete ", as extended by sec. 2 of this Act"

Page 6, lines 1 - 2:

Delete ", or 60 days after the date the governor determines, under sec. 2 of this Act, that the public health disaster emergency no longer exists, whichever is earlier"

Page 6, lines 7 - 8:

Delete "as extended by sec. 2 of this Act,"

Page 6, lines 15 - 18:

Delete "on the earlier of

(A) September 30, 2021; or

(B) the date the governor determines, under sec. 2 of this Act, that the public health disaster emergency no longer exists"

Insert "September 30, 2021"

Page 7, lines 13 - 14:

Delete "as extended by sec. 2 of this Act,"

Page 8, lines 13 - 14:

Delete "as extended by sec. 2 of this Act,"

Page 9, line 16:

Delete "as extended by sec. 2 of this Act,"

Page 10, lines 9 - 13:

Delete "on the earlier of

(1) September 30, 2021; or

(2) the date the governor determines, under sec. 2 of this Act, that the public health disaster emergency declared by the governor under AS 26.23.020 on January 15, 2021, as extended by sec. 2 of this Act, no longer exists"

Insert "September 30, 2021"

Page 10, lines 14 - 18:

Delete "on the earlier of

(1) September 30, 2021; or

(2) the date the governor determines, under sec. 2 of this Act, that the public health disaster emergency declared by the governor under AS 26.23.020 on January 15, 2021, as extended by sec. 2 of this Act, no longer exists"

Insert "September 30, 2021"

CHAIR WILSON objected for purposes of discussion.

SENATOR REINBOLD said this removes Section 2 from the bill. It is a big amendment. First of all, the disaster was unsubstantiated. It was called when there were zero cases. Then it was based on a University of Alaska Anchorage model rife with flaws and errors. This section is unnecessary. The disaster has been unaudited. There have been no checks and balances in regard to this. The disaster was extended back in November to December. She believes it was illegal. The statutes clearly state a disaster can only be 30 days. SB 241 extended it. A lot of people were under duress when SB 241 was done, and she only remembers one hearing. But the bottom line is it was extended again December 15 to January 15. Now the governor is asking for grace for all that he did without letting the legislature weigh in on a single mandate. The legislature wasn't able to weigh in on a single health order. The financial plan was not done by the legislature. The football was stripped and it was given to the executive branch, and now the governor wants the legislature to extend it through September 2021. She finds that completely outrageous. The number of Alaskans suffering is unprecedented. Children are having mental health issues. Businesses are going under. The thought of extending this declaration or making it retroactive is completely unacceptable. It provides no checks and balances. The legislature is a separate branch of government and should not allow "these guys" to do whatever they want and make it retroactive. She strongly supports this amendment.

2:47:05 PM

At ease

2:47:23 PM

CHAIR WILSON reconvened the meeting.

SENATOR BEGICH noted that he agrees with some of the comments of his colleague from Eagle River when it comes to the November, December, and January orders. He cannot support this amendment because it goes beyond that, but he does agree with her about the question of the legality of those other orders. Right now the legislature is focused on its constitutional responsibility to the life, health, and safety of Alaskans, so, regretfully, he will be opposing this amendment.

SENATOR HUGHES added that since the committee passed Amendment 2, changing the date to March 15, there are problems with this being applicable. It would remove the possibility of ending the declaration earlier. She will not support it.

SENATOR REINBOLD explained that these amendments were written to the bill before the committee and with Amendment 2, still makes all this retroactive in regard to the disaster declarations that were done in the past. This amendment is still 100 percent important. The committee members are saying they agree with everything the governor did, with the illegal disaster declarations that were unjustified, unaudited, and with no checks and balances with the legislature. This is very serious separation of powers issues.

SENATOR COSTELLO pointed out that assigning a motive to another legislator is not allowed. She will be a no on this. That does not mean that she agrees with everything the governor does.

SENATOR REINBOLD replied that there was no motive. She was just saying what the amendment did. It was just a statement of fact.

[2:49:30 PM](#)

CHAIR WILSON maintained his objection. A roll call vote was taken. Senator Reinbold voted in favor of Amendment 7 and Senators Begich, Hughes, Costello, and Hughes voted against it. Therefore, Amendment 7 failed by a 1:4 vote.

[2:50:20 PM](#)

At ease

[2:51:07 PM](#)

CHAIR WILSON reconvened the meeting.

[2:51:08 PM](#)

SENATOR REINBOLD moved Amendment 8.

AMENDMENT 8

32-GS1011\A.27
Marx/Dunmire
2/5/21

OFFERED IN THE SENATE
TO: SB 56

BY SENATOR REINBOLD

Page 10, lines 19 - 22:
Delete all material.

Renumber the following bill section accordingly.

CHAIR WILSON objected for purposes of discussion.

SENATOR REINBOLD explained that Amendment 8 eliminates Section 13 in the bill, which is on page 10. Section 13 says the uncodified law of the state of Alaska is amended by adding a new section. This is an extremely dangerous precedent. "Retroactivity. If this Act takes effect after February 14, 2021, this Act is retroactive to February 14, 2021," read Senator Reinbold. Again, this sets a bad precedent. If this law is not passed by February 14, the governor is basically telling the legislature that it will be made retroactive anyway. This is one of the worst precedents she has ever seen. Again, the disaster is unsubstantiated. This is a serious separation of powers issue. Eighteen mandates were passed without input from the legislative branch. The disaster was extended three times without the legislative branch, which she believes was breaking the law. This could have ex post facto laws that the legislature will need to check with Legislative Legal about. The bottom line is that making something retroactive just does not settle right. She needs to vet that with Legislative Legal, but it concerns her. It basically gives immunity to the governor for what he has been doing. The legislature has set a bad precedent, and this section is a serious concern.

CHAIR WILSON said SB 241 had effective dates that were retroactive by the time the governor signed that bill to make sure there was coverage for those businesses and items that needed the retroactivity for better protection after the bill passed and it was signed into law. He will not speak on behalf of the administration, but he believes the retroactivity here is because of where the legislature is with the status of the other body.

SENATOR HUGHES said that when the committee makes a decision about legislation and passes it through the body, the governor is not telling them what to do. The legislature is deciding what to do. The legislature is the policy makers. Her concern, now that they have shortened the declaration so legislators can tease out tools are actually needed so the emergency declaration can be ended, is if the committee takes this out, there will be a problem with figuring out the next 30 days. She does not fully understand the impact of this. Again, these are big and fast policy decisions without all the information necessary. She doesn't know if it would work. The legislature needs the 30 days in order to provide the necessary tools. She will be a no.

SENATOR REINBOLD replied that this is very simple, not heavy-duty legislative work. This is simply saying that if this passes later, the legislature will not make this retroactive, which is terrible precedence.

[2:54:58 PM](#)

CHAIR WILSON maintained his objection. A roll call vote was taken. Senator Reinbold voted in favor of Amendment 8 and Senators Begich, Hughes, Costello, and Wilson voted against it. Therefore, Amendment 8 failed by a 1:4 vote.

[2:55:30 PM](#)

At ease

[2:56:37 PM](#)

CHAIR WILSON reconvened the meeting.

[2:55:39 PM](#)

SENATOR REINBOLD moved Amendment 13.

AMENDMENT 13

32-GS1011\A.4

Dunmire

2/2/21

OFFERED IN THE SENATE
TO: SB 56

BY SENATOR REINBOLD

Page 1, line 7, following "**shareholders;**":

Insert "**relating to personal objections to the
administration of COVID-19 vaccines;**"

Page 10, following line 4:

Insert a new bill section to read:

"* **Sec. 10.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to read:

PERSONAL OBJECTIONS TO THE ADMINISTRATION OF COVID-19 VACCINES. An individual may object to the administration of a COVID-19 vaccine based on religious, medical, or other grounds. A parent or guardian of a minor child may object to the administration of a COVID-19 vaccine to the minor child based on religious, medical, or other grounds. A person may not require an individual to provide justification or documentation to support the

individual's decision to decline a COVID-19 vaccine or to decline a COVID-19 vaccine for a minor child."

Renumber the following bill sections accordingly.

Page 10, line 14:

Delete "5 - 9"

Insert "5 - 10"

SENATOR REINBOLD said that this says, "relating to personal objections to the administration of COVID-19 vaccines." It basically allows for religious, medical, and other grounds to object [to COVID-19 vaccine].

[2:57:08 PM](#)

CHAIR WILSON announced that without objection Amendment 13 passes.

[2:57:17 PM](#)

SENATOR REINBOLD moved Amendment 14.

AMENDMENT 14

32-GS1011\A.2

Dunmire

2/2/21

OFFERED IN THE SENATE

BY SENATOR REINBOLD

TO: SB 56

Page 1, line 7, following "**shareholders;**":

Insert "**relating to informed consent for COVID-19 vaccines;**"

Page 10, following line 4:

Insert a new bill section to read:

"* **Sec. 10.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to read:

INFORMED CONSENT FOR COVID-19 VACCINES. A health care provider may not administer a COVID-19 vaccine to an individual without first obtaining the informed consent of the individual or, if the individual is a minor child, of a parent or guardian of the minor child."

Renumber the following bill sections accordingly.

Page 10, line 14:
Delete "5 - 9"
Insert "5 - 10"

CHAIR WILSON announced that with no objection Amendment 14 passes.

[2:57:35 PM](#)

SENATOR REINBOLD moved Amendment 9.

AMENDMENT 9

32-GS1011\A.24
Marx/Dunmire
2/8/21

OFFERED IN THE SENATE
TO: SB 56

BY SENATOR REINBOLD

Page 1, line 5:
Delete "**telehealth;**"

Page 7, line 9, through page 8, line 9:
Delete all material.

Renumber the following bill sections accordingly.

Page 10, line 14:
Delete "5 - 9"
Insert "5 - 8"

CHAIR WILSON objected for purposes of discussion.

SENATOR REINBOLD observed that the committee had a good telehealth discussion last week. This eliminates telehealth and puts telehealth back in a separate bill, hopefully. SB 56 concerns her because it does not allow or require Alaska physician preference. Before people were able to see a physician firsthand to be able to get to know the physician. That first initial exam is important. This bill does not require an Alaskan physician to have an exam first. That was so important for Alaska physicians. This amendment requires Alaska preference for a physician.

SENATOR HUGHES explained that although she totally agrees with Senator Reinbold that an in-person physical exam is very important with Alaska preference, when a person tests positive

for COVID it is important that that person not have an in-person visit for the first time. Until the state gets a handle on this, leaving the telehealth regulations and statutes as they are to allow greater flexibility is important if there is a shortage of providers in the state. The state can draw on other providers who can help Alaskans maintain good health. Telehealth at this time is particularly important. The legislature needs to leave it as is. She does agree with Senator Reinbold about returning in the future to an Alaskan physician preference.

SENATOR BEGICH said that given the restriction to March 15 that the committee adopted, he is only going to oppose this amendment because of that restriction. This section of the bill needs to be rewritten and he hopes to see those changes made.

SENATOR REINBOLD added that the legislature worked hard on this in the past. Even with COVID, there are excellent treatments for COVID. American doctors on the frontline have treated so many patients, many times one-on-one, with ivermectin and hydroxychloroquine, and so much is known about the disease now. She worked in the medical industry for a long time and that first initial visit is so powerful and important. Even with COVID, it is still important for people to meet their patients.

[3:01:16 PM](#)

CHAIR WILSON maintained his objection. A roll call vote was taken. Senator Reinbold voted in favor of Amendment 9 and Senators Hughes, Costello, Begich, and Wilson voted against it. Therefore, Amendment 9 failed by a 1:4 vote.

CHAIR WILSON noted that the amendment process would end for the day. Members will always have a chance to offer amendments on the floor and in the next committee of referral. Committee members can talk to committee chairs and members to continue the amendment process.

[3:02:12 PM](#)

At ease

[3:02:18 PM](#)

CHAIR WILSON reconvened the meeting.

CHAIR WILSON said that he believed that the amendment dealing with occupational and professional licensing will be considered by the chair of the next committee of referral

SENATOR HUGHES said that before moving SB 56, she was thankful to have made a speech earlier about the work ahead so the state can move on to a full period of recovery and into a state of normalcy, which is important. She wants the public to understand that what is happening in various municipalities is not connected to this declaration being extended for 30 days. Those decisions are made at the local level. If anyone has concerns about schools being closed, about any type of mandate, people should be talking to city councils or assembly members. She moved SB 56, version 32-GS1011\A, from committee as amended with attached fiscal notes and individual recommendations.

3:03:57 PM

SENATOR REINBOLD objected.

3:04:03 PM

A roll call vote was taken. Senators Costello, Begich, Hughes, and Wilson voted in favor of moving SB 56 from committee and Senator Reinbold voted against it. Therefore, the motion passed by a 4:1 vote. SB 56, version 32-GS1011\A, as amended moved from committee.

SENATOR BEGICH noted that earlier in the committee a comment was made about 45 million flu cases last year. In 2019 there were 65,0000 flu cases. He wanted to correct that for the record. He also wanted to apologize because last week he called Mr. Coons' comments derogatory toward the senator from Eagle River. While he did not agree with those comments, he apologizes unreservedly to Mr. Coons for saying they were derogatory. On hearing the comments a second time, they were not, but Senator Begich does take exception to comments that are made about a senator's ability to review or not review documents.

SENATOR REINBOLD shared that she wants Alaskans to know that she passionately disagrees with SB 56. She absolutely plans on voting no on this. The state has an unprecedented situation going on right now with many students out of school, a mental health crisis, economic crisis, small businesses suffering, and people tend to bow down to the almighty dollar, the federal dollar, at the cost of freedom, at the cost of small business, at the cost of mental health. DHSS is pushing a controversial, new mRNA vaccination. That is the whole push to get this bill through, procurement, money, vaccination clinics, etc., based on an experimental vaccine that is only emergency use authorization. The state needs to go slowly for the protection of the health of Alaskans. She is not an antivaxxer, but she is concerned about the mRNA vaccinations, which they say is their

primary purpose for this bill. John Hochendoner gave exceptional testimony today, which summarizes what she believes with regard to what this bill is about. On behalf of all Alaskans who are suffering, she apologizes that she was not able to stop this bill.

SENATOR COSTELLO shared that a vote yes today was a vote to move this bill to the next committee, which is the committee she chairs, Senate Labor and Commerce. She invited those not able to testify today to testify in her committee tomorrow. She welcomes any comments submitted to the committee in written form. She thanked the chair for getting the bill to her committee.

[CSSB 56(HSS) was moved from the Health and Social Services Standing Committee.]

3:08:09 PM

There being no further business to come before the committee, Chair Wilson adjourned the Senate Health and Social Services Standing Committee meeting at 3:08 p.m.